



News Release

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Health labs expand to keep pace with statewide disease investigation demand *Groundbreaking today marks start of construction*

OLYMPIA — A construction project to help the state Public Health Laboratories meet the increasing demands of disease investigation began today at the facility in Shoreline. The project will improve efficiency, ensure safety for staff and the community, and bolster capacity for disease and environmental testing.

At the groundbreaking ceremony today, Secretary of Health Mary Selecky said the project will benefit all state residents. “Whether it’s newborn screening, tracking a foodborne illness, testing for tuberculosis, or monitoring disease outbreaks like the H1N1 flu, our laboratories are on the forefront of infectious disease investigation and environmental testing and monitoring.”

Selecky says the project is on time and within its budget. The groundbreaking starts construction after four years of planning. The addition provides more space for laboratory storage, receiving, and customer service. Selecky noted the event takes place during Public Health Week — a national recognition of the importance of the work of public health.

The Public Health Laboratories provide testing for public and private health organizations across the state. Testing is performed by nationally recognized scientists in the areas of communicable disease, shellfish testing, environmental monitoring, and newborn screening. More than five million tests are performed at the facility every year.

The Public Health Laboratories facility, built in 1985, is an important link in the public health system both in the state and the nation.

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Visit the Washington Department of Health Web site at <http://www.doh.wa.gov> for a healthy dose of information.